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# Claims

[c1] An apparatus for removing metal from a metallized surface of a workpiece, comprising:
a polishing pad,
an electrically conductive surface disposed proximate to said polishing pad;
at least one conducting element disposed within the electrically conductive surface;
a workpiece carrier configured to press the workpiece against the polishing pad; and
a power source having a first positive output connected to the conducting element and a second negative output connected to the electrically conductive surface.

[c2] The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said at least one conducting element is positioned flush with a top surface of said polishing pad.

[c3] The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said at least one conducting element is positioned above a top surface of said polishing pad.

[c4] The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said at least one conducting element is positioned below a top surface of said

polishing pad.

[c5] The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said conducting elements are positioned within the electrically conductive surface such that a uniform electric potential gradient is created across the metallized surface of the wafer.

[c6] The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said at least one conducting element is comprised of a material that exhibits low electrical resistance and resistance to corrosion.

[c7] The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the distance between the metallized surface of the workpiece and the electrically conductive surface is less than 3 mm.

[c8] The apparatus of claim 7 wherein the distance between the metallized surface of the workpiece and the electrically conductive surface is less than 1 mm.

[c9] The apparatus of claim 8 wherein the distance between the metallized surface of the workpiece and the electrically conductive surface is less than 200 angstroms.

[c10] The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the metallized surface of the workpiece does not contact the electrically conductive surface during removal of the metal from the metallized surface of the workpiece.